

File: OER

4 June 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR: Acting Deputy Director for Intelligence

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ATTENTION : [REDACTED]

SUBJECT : Relations with DIA

1. This memorandum is in response to the recent request of the DDI for delineation of those major problems with DIA which would be appropriate for discussion by the DDCI and, hopefully, resolvable at his level with DIA.

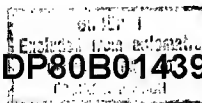
2. For the past four years components of OER engaged in work on the Vietnam War have worked very closely with their DIA counterparts. The wide variety of relations between the two agencies have included exchanges between working level analysts, informal and formal coordination of intelligence reports, participation in joint working groups and the publication of joint intelligence reports. The working relationship between the two agencies is better than it was a few years ago and there has been marked progress in developing more consensus and agreement on critical intelligence problems. Nevertheless, the relationship has been an exceedingly trying experience which has frequently impeded the intelligence process, particularly on matters of national intelligence concern.

3. Our difficulties with DIA reflect both institutional arrangements and management practices within DIA, and the basic DIA philosophy about its relationship to the national intelligence community on the one hand and to the field commanders and their intelligence units on the other hand.

Institutional-Management Factors

4. Several facets of DIA organizational arrangements and management practices have a disruptive effect on harmonious and effective CIA-DIA relationships. Some of the more important of these follow:

a. DIA has chosen to diffuse and to decentralize a number of the intelligence functions associated with the Vietnam War. At the same time, however, they have not



set up procedures or machinery to coordinate or resolve differences of view between the separate DIA units that may be concerned with a particular aspect of the war. Thus CIA may find that it cannot reach agreement with DIA because two or more relatively autonomous DIA units are in disagreement. Apparently such a disagreement can only be resolved at the highest levels of DIA, levels to which lesser ranking units are unable or reluctant to bring their cases. As a result, the DIA position frequently becomes such a watered-down compromise that it is not meaningful, or the reaching of CIA-DIA agreement is impossible or must be deferred for unacceptably long periods of time.

b. Another obstacle to effective inter-agency relationships results from a DIA unwillingness to authorize its officers -- at almost every level -- to enter into official inter-agency agreements on intelligence questions. It is not uncommon after days of hammering out an "agreed" position to find that the position accepted by the DIA representative is completely unofficial and informal. Moreover, the subsequent amendments to the DIA representative's position are so numerous and from so many different levels of the organization that any supposed agreement is rapidly undone.

The Philosophy Problem

5. This heading is a rubric for a basic DIA approach to the intelligence function that is a constant irritant to effective inter-agency relations and, more significantly, has a harmful impact on the whole national intelligence function.

6. The problem arises from the conflicting pressure within DIA on the one hand, to present the best possible input into national intelligence and on the other hand to conform with and to support the intelligence judgments of the military services and field commanders. This dilemma has several untoward results. DIA frequently feels compelled, for example, to espouse viewpoints of field commanders with which it does not agree. Or, in seeking to accommodate divergent views, DIA produces intelligence that inadequately presents the views of either side. This situation in one famous instance -- the enemy strength debate -- delayed for over 15 months the production of highly significant national intelligence.

7. This entire philosophical dilemma is pertinent to the very basic issue of determining the fundamental purpose and function of a national defense intelligence agency -- should it be an independent and objective intelligence voice for the Department of Defense or should it be a conveyance for the intelligence views of field commanders?

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